



GET OUT THE VOTE

The municipal elections in 2018 have been hijacked by the Ford Conservatives – but we cannot let them hijack the outcome. It's up to every one of us to help elect more progressive voices than ever to public office in Toronto and York Region.

The candidates endorsed by Labour Council have all gone through a rigorous process of interviews and careful consideration of the strengths they would bring to public office. With the arbitrary reduction of Toronto City Council to only 25 seats, there are many good people who have been pushed aside by Doug Ford's shameful abuse of power. It is regrettable that Ford has prevailed, but we cannot afford to lose proven leaders in hard-fought races.

Labour Council's municipal program lays out the key issues in this election. Billions in city assets have to be defended; transit improved and kept in public hands; good jobs and community benefits secured; tax fairness won; affordable housing developed and good quality services provided to every community. We cannot afford to have a majority of Toronto City Council going along with an austerity or privatization agenda from either Queen's Park or the Mayor's office.

The stakes are huge for the School Boards. There is no doubt that the Ford government will attack the education sector, going after salaries and benefits of front line employees and seeking to sell off assets while promoting charter schools or voucher schemes. We will need strong voices in both Public and Catholic School Boards to resist.

In York Region, similar issues face the voters. Ford scrapped direct election of Regional Chair - the most powerful office in the Regional government - so that backroom deals, like stripping statutory holidays away from retail workers, can continue. Our affiliates have worked with a number of people who are running for Regional Council, and we should strengthen those relationships through this campaign.

Canada's largest city-region can only prosper if there is a strong foundation of public services and a commitment to good jobs. We are asking all affiliates help elect progressive candidates across the region and to circulate labour's endorsements among members. We need to use social media, stewards' networks, phone calls, membership meetings... every means available to convince union members and their families to vote and help out in this election.

Most of all we need volunteers for candidates in City Councils and School Boards. Let's make a priority to recruit activists to get involved in the next three weeks. Volunteer for a campaign, talk to neighbours, help get out the vote – together we can make a difference to the results on October 22nd!

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